

**EMPOWERING VOTERS
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY**



**THE
CAPITOL
VOTER**

**OCTOBER
2023**

IN THE OCTOBER CAPITOL VOTER

- **President: Defenders of Democracy Never Rest**
- **Voter Service Happenings**
- **Book Discussion Group Scheduled for November**
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LWVLA CALENDAR

Thursday, October 26, Education Committee presents a Conversation with Lansing School District Superintendent Ben Shuldiner, 7:15 pm, Allen Neighborhood Center, 1611 Kalamazoo St. (entry on north side of building).

Saturday, October 28, City of Lansing's "Souls to the Polls, Trunk or Treat event", 1-4 pm at 2500 S. Washington, Lansing.

Tuesday, October 31, *mock voting* at The Village's Halloween Party, 6-8 pm., 3525 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Suite G, Lansing.

Thursday, Nov. 2, LWVLA Zoom webinar on Proposition 2 and its implementation; time to

be announced later.

Wednesday, Nov. 8, League Luncheon celebrating 50-year members, 11:30 a.m. at Coral Gables, 2838 Grand River Ave, East Lansing.

Thursday, Nov. 16, Book Discussion Group, 10 am via Zoom.

See articles below for more information.

From our partners' calendars:

Friday, Nov. 17, 5-9 pm and **Sat., Nov. 18**, 9 am-5 pm, Peace Education Center's [Annual Alternative Holiday Sale](#), Edgewood United Church, 469 Hagadorn Rd., East Lansing. See website for more information.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Donna Mullins

We're only a few weeks away from local elections. Local turnout is usually low for these; even in contentious elections less than a quarter of the voters participate.

That's one reason why the Observer Corps was developed, to remind people that local elections count.

Unfortunately, the time it takes to observe local government meetings didn't seem to get the results we hoped for. The question we are asking now is, "What is

the most effective and efficient way for our League to demonstrate the importance of local government on the day-to-day lives of citizens?" Do you have an idea that might work?

City councils and county, township and school boards make decisions on roads, zoning, economic development, how we live and how we die. I know you will all be voting, but perhaps you could remind a neighbor or friend that their vote counts, especially when so few votes are likely to be cast.



Be sure to read the Voter Services article, which tells you about several opportunities for participation in critical and fun community activities. The most fun is Lansing's Trunk or Treat, where the League has an important presence. It is SO MUCH FUN! Parents drive through with costumed children, which is just a hoot. We encourage all to park and go inside for more treats, where adults can vote in this year's election and children can use real voting machines to vote on child-centric issues like "Should there be a limit on the amount of candy you can receive on Halloween?" If you do it once, you will be hooked for years to come.

We will also be developing a speakers' bureau to explain to voters the new election rules that were made possible by the passage of Proposal 2. We'll be going to senior centers, libraries, schools, service clubs, churches and anywhere there is a request. There's a slide deck with a script that can be adapted for the audience. Along with local clerks, the League remains the most trusted source of election information. Having trust in fair elections is necessary for democracy to thrive. At a time when elections are safer than

ever before in history, bad actors are suggesting otherwise in order to override the will of the people. It's important to get accurate information out to voters. Even if you would prefer bungy jumping to public speaking, knowing the facts about elections will make you the smartest person at your Thanksgiving table (although, I'm sure that's always been the case...).

We aren't running out of things to do. Defenders of democracy never rest. But they do take time to celebrate, and we have TWO people who are receiving recognition for being League members for FIFTY YEARS. On November 8, Pat Donath and Judy Karandjeff will join Margaret Peisner-Brattin, Mary Rhodes, Shirley Sliker, Beany Tomber and Elizabeth Winder as 50+ members and never have to pay dues again. We'll celebrate them and pat each other on the back for working toward a more perfect union

Together,
Donna

VOTER SERVICES UPDATES

Joanne Winkelman, V.P. Voter Service

Speakers' Bureau for spreading the word on Proposal 2

The LWVLA will be hosting a Zoom webinar in the evening on November 2 (time to be decided later) to share information about the implementation of Proposal 2 and how it will affect voters in 2024. Watch your email on how to register for the presentation so we can send the Zoom link directly to you. Donna Mullins and I will be presenting the entire PowerPoint that was given to us by the LWVMI to all interested members.

After the presentation, we will discuss our next steps to create a Speakers' Bureau of interested League members who would like to share this information with various groups. We are already getting requests to present around the area. The presentation on November 2 is intended for *all* our League members; the follow-up meeting for those interested in being a part of the Speakers' Bureau will be scheduled after November 2. Stay tuned for more information.



October Events

This October we are busy registering high school students and will be participating in Halloween events that include information on voting.

The League of Women Voters Lansing Area will again be participating in the City of Lansing's **Souls to the Polls, Trunk or Treat** event on October 28 from 1- 4 p.m. at 2500 S. Washington, Lansing. Not only will the League pass out goodies to the children and adults, we will also be assisting in the children's voting area and traffic control. The City of Lansing is piloting early voting so all Lansing voters can vote in person on the 28th. This event is both indoors and outdoors.

The City of Lansing Clerk's Office has asked us to assist in the *mock voting* at **The Village's Halloween Party** on October 31, from 6-8 p.m. The Village is located at 3525 S.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Suite G, Lansing, 48910. This event is indoors.
If you are interested in either or both events, please contact [me here](#) asap.

Proposal 2 Legislative Summary

If you are wondering about the legislation surrounding Proposal 2, Promote the Vote has provided the following summary:

While nothing has been set in stone, we likely have about one month before the state legislature adjourns for the year. Thanks to Elections Committee chairs Senator Moss and Representative Tsernoglou, this has been an extremely productive year when it comes to pro-voter policy. The legislature has not only passed bills implementing key Prop 2 reforms such as [early voting](#), [enhanced ballot tracking](#) and the [permanent mail ballot list](#), but a number of other bills, including [pre-registration](#), [secure AVR](#), and an [elimination of the ban on paid rides to the polls](#) are currently working their way through the legislature. We look forward to those bills passing and being signed by Governor Whitmer.

Early Voting Pilot Programs - November 2023

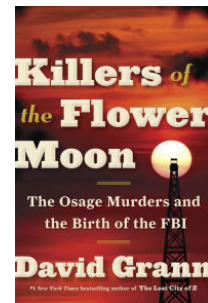
Offering early voting is not required this November (because it's not a statewide or federal election), but a number of communities will be piloting early voting.

- The City of Lansing - In Lansing, early voting will be available on Saturday, October 28, and from Monday, October 30 through Sunday, November 5 at the South Washington Election Unit. Hours and other details are [here](#).
- The City of East Lansing - Early voting will be available in East Lansing from Monday, October 30 through Saturday, November 4 at the East Lansing Public Library. Hours will be 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except on Wednesday, November 1 and Thursday, November 2, when early voting will be available until 6 pm.
- Delta Township - Delta Township will be offering early voting from Monday, October 30 through Sunday, November 5 at the Delta Township Administration Building. Hours and other details are [here](#).

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Donna Mullins

After a bit of stumbling, the Book Discussion Group decided to change its regular meeting date to the THIRD THURSDAY of the month starting November 16. On that day we will be discussing *Killers of the Flower Moon* by David Grann. This book tells the story of the Osage Indians who settled on “scrub land” that just happened to cover a vast oil deposit, which made them very wealthy. Some people will do anything for money, including murder. There were many that occurred (murders, that is), and the FBI was called in to investigate. This is a true story, with drama, violence and history all vying for the spotlight. The story is so compelling that Martin Scorsese left New York for Oklahoma to make a movie about it. The movie will be premiering just in time for viewing before the book group meets (not for the faint of heart... I will view with my eyes covered). We meet at the same time, 10 a.m., on Zoom to enable access to everyone. To get the link [contact me](#).



REMEMBERING SHIRLEY SLIKER



While preparing for the 50+ celebration we learned that life member Shirley Sliker passed away in Prospect, Kentucky in September of 2022. Shirley's legacy lives on in the Alan and Shirley Brocker Sliker Culinary Collection at the MSU Library. This wonderful collection of Little Books (recipe booklets published by companies) reflects what was on American tables for many generations. You can [browse the collection](#) electronically and maybe cook a meal to celebrate the memory of Shirley!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS FOR OCTOBER

Camilla Davis, Membership Director

SAVE THE DATE FOR A SPECIAL LUNCHEON ON NOVEMBER 8

On Wednesday, November 8, there will be a special luncheon at Coral Gables Restaurant on Grand River in East Lansing. The event begins at 11:30 with social time, followed by a buffet lunch. Reservation information will be sent via email soon.

We'll be honoring LWVLA's Life Members (those with 50 or more years of membership) and appreciate all members for their support of the League. We will also celebrate the completion of the November election.

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

It's time for members who joined LWVLA before February 1, 2023 to renew their membership.

There is an incentive to renew ASAP. For the 2023 dues renewal campaign, those who pay their dues by October 31 will be entered in a drawing for a refund of \$65, the cost of one Primary membership.

There are two ways to pay your dues:

#1 Join online by using your credit card or PayPal account:

- Scroll down to "How Do I Join?"
- Choose the type of membership from the drop-down menu.
- Provide a second name if you choose "Household."
- Click the "Pay Now" button below.
- There are fees we must pay when online payment is used. Please consider leaving a "tip."
- [Use this link to the LWV - Lansing Area website](#)

#2 [Download the form](#), fill it out and send a check for the correct amount to:

League of Women Voters of the Lansing Area
P.O. Box 971
East Lansing, MI 48826

To be eligible to enter the drawing for the refund your payment must be received by



ORDER A MAGNETIZED MEMBERSHIP BADGE TODAY!

Would you like to have a League of Women Voters membership badge with your name printed below the League logo? What makes these badges special is that they have a magnet on the back that solves the problem of pinning or sticking a badge on your clothing. The cost is approximately \$15.

Please [contact me](#) if you have questions about any items in this membership update.

**WHERE HAVE ALL THE COLLEGE STUDENTS GONE?
EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**
Bettie Landauer-Menchik, Committee Chair

In recent years, the governor and legislature have been using the School Aid Fund to fund state universities and community colleges. The School Aid is specifically set up to provide funds to K-12 school districts, intermediate school districts (ISDs), and other K-12 education-related entities. While LWV does not have a specific position on higher education, it does support the connection between K-12 and post-secondary study. As money is diverted from K-12 education, should the state consider closing or consolidating colleges whose enrollment is declining?

Institution	Freshmen Enrollment 2022	% Change in freshmen enrollment 2013-2022
Michigan State	9,676	23%
Wayne State	2,577	19%
Northern Michigan	1,415	16%
U of Michigan	7,050	13%
Michigan Technical	1,388	11%
MI-Dearborn	1,005	5%
Grand Valley	3,993	-3%
Ferris State	1,746	-13%
Saginaw Valley State	1,337	-16%
Oakland	2,117	-17%
Western Michigan	2,577	-19%
MI-Flint	521	-28%
Eastern Michigan	1,978	-31%
Central Michigan	2,019	-32%
Lake Superior State	273	-35%
Total	39,672	-1%

Source: Michigan Association of State Colleges and Universities

Table 1: Freshmen Enrollment in Michigan's State Colleges and Universities, 2013-2022

Table 1 shows how freshmen enrollment in most Michigan colleges and universities has dropped dramatically in the past ten years.

Location	Enrollment 2021-22	% Change in Enrollment 2012-13 to 2021-22
College Type (All)	485,613	-4%
4-Year Colleges and Universities	225,401	-9%
Community Colleges	238,832	-13%
Wayne County CC	21,920	139%
Delta College	10,096	24%
Washtenaw CC	18,768	14%
Muskegon CC	5,375	8%
Grand Rapids CC	18,859	7%
Glen Oaks CC	1,683	3%
Alpena CC	2,388	-1%
Henry Ford College	16,828	-1%
Gogebic CC	1,069	-4%
Kirtland CC	2,236	-5%
Bay De Noc CC	2,642	-10%
Jackson College	6,647	-14%
Lansing CC	16,652	-17%
Macomb CC	24,240	-18%
West Shore CC	1,335	-19%
Schoolcraft College	14,023	-20%
Montcalm CC	1,990	-20%
St. Clair County CC	4,382	-23%
Mid Michigan College	4,376	-23%
Southwestern Michigan College	2,181	-26%
Northwestern Michigan College	4,395	-26%
Kalamazoo Valley CC	10,286	-29%
Monroe County CC	3,360	-34%
Kellogg CC	7,721	-34%
Oakland CC	22,921	-36%
Mott CC	9,169	-37%
North Central Michigan College	2,211	-38%
Lake Michigan College	4,154	-45%
Bay Mills CC	709	NA

Table 2: Change in Michigan's Community College Enrollment, 2012-13 to 2021-22

A similar pattern exists when looking at total enrollment at the state's community colleges in Table 2. Note

While overall, freshmen enrollment has only declined by 1% over the last 10 years, the distribution of enrollment varies dramatically. MSU has the largest increase in enrollment, followed by Wayne State, Northern Michigan, and the University of Michigan. In contrast, freshmen enrollment at four colleges—MI-Flint, Eastern and Central Michigan, and Lake Superior State—has declined by almost one-third.

that the data for Table 1 is only for freshmen enrollment, while Table 2 includes all students enrolled full-time and part-time.

Only Wayne County Community College and Delta College in Bay County have seen significant increases in enrollment over ten years. The majority of community colleges have seen enrollment declines of 20% or more, with six colleges losing more than one-third of their students. Of interest is the increasing number of students attending college in Wayne County.

In 2024, the state will spend just over \$1 billion from the School Aid Fund (SAF) to support colleges and universities and \$544.5 million for community colleges (*Detroit Free Press*, July 21, 2023). With enrollment declining in many of our colleges, should state government limit the number and locations of colleges it supports? How should the state prioritize education funding so Michigan is positioned to meet future demand for skilled workers?

ONE THING

The manufacture of smartphones requires precious metals and earths such as gold, tungsten and cobalt, all of which are obtained through a carbon-intensive mining process. You can lower the carbon footprint of your phone by keeping it longer and, when you must replace it, buying a refurbished phone instead of a brand new one.

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK

All committees would welcome new members. Contact the chairs for more information.

VOTER SERVICE: Contact [Joanne Winkelman](#)

K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE: Contact [Bettie Landauer-Menchik](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE: Contact [Linda Melaragni](#)

ENVIRONMENT ADVOCACY GROUP: Contact [Ellen Link](#) or [Elaine Fischhoff](#)

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